



## **Board of Legislators**

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### **Allegany County Legislature Condemns Medicaid Funding Takeback**

Loss of funding to cost local taxpayers over \$1 million

The Allegany County Legislature passed a resolution on February 8 in opposition to a proposal within Governor Hochul's State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2024 Executive Budget.

The Resolution addresses Hochul's plan to withhold federal Medicaid funding from counties. The Enhanced Federal Medicaid Assistance Percentage (eFMAP) was created in 2010 as part of the Affordable Care Act. Its intent was to assist county governments with the burdensome local share of Medicaid costs.

Board Chairman W. Brooke Harris emphasized the significance of the hardship on taxpayers. "In the last five years, this is probably the single most fiscally damaging executive budget item for our county taxpayers. By various estimates, the cost to (Allegany County) taxpayers is going to be between \$1.2 and \$1.5 million dollars annually.

"It's not the State's money," Harris said. "We get accustomed to the state withholding its own money, but we get particularly frustrated when the State withholds federal money that was, by all accounts, fully intended to be shared with the counties to support the local share of Medicaid costs."

The New York State Association of Counties (NYSAC) estimates the statewide cost to local taxpayers to exceed \$1 billion. In a statement addressing the Governor's Executive Budget, NYSAC President Michael E. Zurlo stated, "At a time when New York is facing an affordability crisis, the last thing the Governor should do is burden local taxpayers with more costs that will drive up the cost of homeownership and rent, increase business expenses, and make New York more unaffordable."

"Not only does this proposal harm New York's local taxpayers," he continued, "but it also subverts Congress' intent that eFMAP be shared with local governments that contribute to the Medicaid program."

Allegany County Legislator Janice Burdick (District V, Alfred), urged taxpayers to contact their State representatives. “This is a very important resolution,” Burdick stated. “I encourage anyone listening and all our residents to contact their (elected officials) and ask them for any help getting this passed.”

The SFY 2024 Executive Budget is currently in the “30-Day Amendments” phase, during which the Governor may make unrestricted changes to the Executive Budget. After that time, any alterations require approval of the State Legislature.

Harris explained the importance of quick action in opposition to the proposal. “Now is the time to correct this proposal. We urge the Governor to amend the budget and continue remitting eFMAP funding to counties in 2024. If she’s unwilling, we urge the State Legislature to serve their constituents well and protect the interests of local taxpayers.”

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